

# NEWSRELEASE



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Corrections director receives national award**

Montana Department of Corrections Director Mike Ferriter received the 2010 Leadership Innovation Award from The Pacific Institute on Wednesday.

The Pacific Institute, based in Seattle, is a nationally recognized motivational institute that works with government and private corporations to improve performance and encourage professional growth of employees, change management and promote development of leaders.

The national award, presented in a ceremony at the state Capitol, recognizes Ferriter's efforts to bring the institute's programs to many of the department's employees and offenders under its jurisdiction.

The Pacific Institute's "Investment in Excellence" curriculum has been a staple on the department's professional development menu for several years and has reached 622 corrections employees. Ferriter led the effort to extend similar programs for male offenders two years ago.

"Steps to Economic and Personal Success" (STEPS) and "New Directions" teaches offenders how to change their way of thinking about themselves, their lives and their criminal background. While it is too early to determine the effect of this effort on recidivism rates among participating offenders, the program already has had a positive impact on their behavior while incarcerated. Graduates of the program have had more success at parole hearings, better production in work assignments and demonstrated a greater sense of cohesiveness. More than 450 inmates have participated in the programs so far.

"Director Ferriter has been the engine driving the use of these programs and expansion of the courses to offenders, because he realizes the potential impact of this effort to make Montana a better place to live," said Curt Swenson, chief of the department's Professional Development Bureau. "Without his leadership and unwavering commitment, scores of corrections professionals and hundreds of offenders would not have a chance to experience these life-changing programs."

"The Innovative Leadership Award is a relatively new concept at TPI," said Mark Schlosser, senior project director at The Pacific Institute. "Our goal is to honor those leaders in our world-wide markets that show creativity and innovation above and beyond normal."

"When we saw how Mike's use of our curriculum was not only changing the culture at Montana DOC, but impacting the lives of inmates, we said, 'Wow! This is really making a difference for every citizen in the state of Montana.'"

This is the second time the award has been given. Alabama Coach Nick Saban, whose team won the national championship in 2009, received the first award last year.

The Pacific Institute website: <http://www.thepacificinstitute.us/v2/>

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